

STATE BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION NO. I-4-05

April 19, 2005

The following is offered in response to your April 7, 2005 letter to me in which you seek a formal interpretation of the provisions of the 1999 State Building Code with respect to the need for a building permit.

Question 1: Is a building permit needed for the installation of a modular ramp system which would allow access to a single-family residence?

Answer 1: Yes, a permit is required. The ramp would be regulated by Section R311.6 of the 2003 International Residential Code portion of the 1999 State Building Code, which sets forth requirements for slope, landings and handrails. Please note that the referenced code contains an exception to the requirement for frost-protected footings for accessory structures not attached to the dwelling, so if the total area of the ramp and its landings does not exceed 400 square feet, permanent footings are not required. Prior to issuance of a building permit, the building department must receive written zoning approval.

Question 2: Is a permit required for a portable (folding or "suitcase") ramp?

Answer 2: No, presuming the ramp is assembled and disassembled at each use. If the ramp is left in place for a maximum of 180 days, Section R107 of the referenced code would be applicable requiring a temporary permit showing compliance with the applicable sections of the code. Zoning approval may also be required based on local zoning regulations. If left in place for longer than 180 days, the answer to Question 1 would apply.